

## CELEBRATING 75 YEARS!

## REACHING OUT, TOUCHING LIVES!

## Focus

Continued from Page 2

and arts programs, 680 full-time, part-time and seasonal employees, and a roughly \$20 million annual budget.

By all accounts and a long list of accomplishments, Kuester and her staff have succeeded in fulfilling their anniversary theme of "Reaching Out, Touching Lives!"

For a city the size of Greensboro, with a population of about 247,000, the department's programs, reaching residents of all ages and backgrounds, are extensive and impressive. The department also boasts a variety of local arts programs, another reflection, Kuester says, of residents' input.

"Over the past 75 years there has been a willingness on the part of our citizens to partner with us and to come to us openly to give us their ideas and suggestions of what we should be doing and then supporting it," she says.

"That has given us a diverse department in terms of our offerings," Kuester adds. "For example, many parks and recreation

## SPECIAL EVENT

■ **What:** Greensboro Parks & Recreation's 75th Anniversary Celebration

■ **When:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 27

■ **Where:** Country Park — the city's first park — at 3902 Nathanael Greene Drive

■ **Activities:** Parade, fun run, games, entertainment and prizes for all ages

■ **Admission:** Free

■ **Information:** 373-2574

■ **Online:** [www.greensboro-nc.gov/leisure](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/leisure)

departments across the country don't have an entire arts program like we do."

According to Chris Wilson, parks, gardens and program support manager, the department operates more than 170 facilities and cares for more than 3,500 acres of parks and other green space, including several historic city cemeteries. It also operates and maintains several watershed and historic parks.

The department's master plan, a 20-year document, extends to



NANCY SIDELINGER/Special Sections Photographer

The Parks & Recreation Department kicked off 75th anniversary festivities Oct. 4-5, 2008, with special events at the Greensboro Sportsplex. Performances included the Walsh Kelly School of Irish Dance.

2017. Future projects include Keeley Park, a 138-acre regional park in the northeast area, and Gateway Gardens, which is located near N.C. A&T, UNCG's new Gateway University Research Park and Barber Park.

In November, despite a downbeat national economy, Greensboro voters approved a \$20 million parks and rec-

reational facilities bond referendum. The proposal was scrutinized by media and voters, but the passage wasn't entirely surprising. Kuester notes that in her 40 years with the department, voters have never turned down a parks and recreation bond referendum.

Money from the sale of the municipal bonds will provide

\$12 million for a new competitive 50-meter regional swim center, plus money to develop athletic fields, renovate neighborhood parks, improve Smith Senior Center, repair and upgrade pools, and build gardens, parks and other facilities.

Kuester notes the new aquatic center will be well-used for swim meets, classes and public swimming.

"Local high schools fight for pool space, and also some of the local colleges don't have the kind of space that this facility will provide," Kuester said.

She also indicated the department may seek more private funds for the aquatic center.

"Twelve million dollars won't necessarily build the kind of aquatic center that I think the community desires," Kuester said. "But we'll have the opportunity for great leverage to partner with some of the groups who would benefit from this and perhaps get additional money to make it a little bit more than the \$12 million could make it," she added.

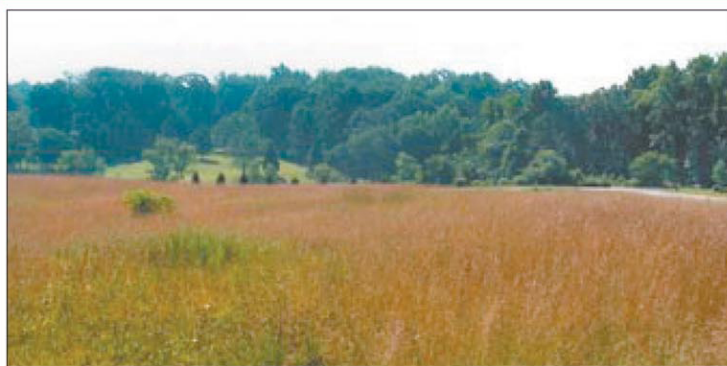
The department's leaders are clearly looking ahead to reaching out to future generations of Parks & Recreation patrons.

# TRIAD SIGN GUYS

## SIGNS, BANNERS & VEHICLE GRAPHICS

336.547.8815  
[TriadSignGuys.com](http://TriadSignGuys.com)

## PIEDMONT LAND CONSERVANCY



Protecting the Piedmont's landscape of family farms, river corridors, important landmarks and parks – including Price Park in Guilford County.

The 92-acre Price Park is one of Greensboro's largest parks and home to a cooperative effort to restore a native grassland for educational and wildlife habitat purposes.



Serving Alamance, Caswell, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin Counties.

336.691.0088

[www.piedmontland.org/info@piedmontland.org](http://www.piedmontland.org/info@piedmontland.org)